

HPTH - Hypothermia

HPTH-C COMPLICATIONS

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand common or serious complications of hypothermia.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that complications depend on how low and how long the body temperature falls.
2. Explain that the lower the core body temperature, the greater the chance of complications and permanent damage.
3. Discuss common and important complications of hypothermia, e.g., arrhythmias, dehydration, hyperkalemia, hyperglycemia, hypoglycemia, altered arterial blood gasses, infection, gangrene, amputation, coma, and frostbite. **Refer to FRST.**
4. Emphasize to seek early medical intervention.

HPTH-CUL CULTURAL/SPIRITUAL ASPECTS OF HEALTH

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the impact and influences that cultural and spiritual traditions, practices, and beliefs have on health and wellness.

STANDARDS:

1. Discuss the potential role of cultural/spiritual traditions, practices and beliefs in achieving and maintaining health and wellness. Refer to clergy services, traditional healers, or other culturally appropriate resources.
2. Explain that traditional medicines/treatments should be reviewed with the healthcare provider to determine if there are positive or detrimental interactions with prescribed treatment. Explain that the medical treatment plan must be followed as prescribed to be effective.

HPTH-DP DISEASE PROCESS

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the pathophysiology of hypothermia.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that a drop in the body's core temperature to 95°F or below is the definition of hypothermia and that body temperature regulation is achieved through precise balancing of heat production, heat conservation, and heat loss.
2. Explain the normal body temperature range is considered to be 36.2° to 37.7°C (96.2° to 99.4°F) but that all parts of the body do not have the same temperature;

the extremities are generally cooler than the trunk and the body core is generally warmer than the skin surface.

3. Discuss that hypothermia usually comes on gradually and people aren't aware they need medical attention. Discuss that common behaviors/signs may be a result of changes in motor coordination and levels of consciousness caused by hypothermia. Some common signs are:
 - a. shivering, which is your body's attempt to generate heat through muscle activity
 - b. "umbles" — stumbles, mumbles, fumbles and grumbles
 - c. Slurred speech
 - d. Abnormally slow rate of breathing
 - e. Cold, pale skin
 - f. Fatigue, lethargy, or apathy
4. Briefly describe hypothermia causes vasoconstriction, alterations in microcirculation, coagulation, and ischemic tissue damage.
5. Explain that environmental conditions, inadequate clothing, and some disease states or conditions may predispose to hypothermia.

HPTH-EQ EQUIPMENT

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the indication for the use of equipment.

STANDARDS:

1. Discuss the indications for and benefits of prescribed equipment.
2. Discuss types and features of medical equipment as appropriate.
3. Discuss signs of equipment malfunction and the proper action to take in case of malfunction.

HPTH-FU FOLLOW-UP

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the importance of follow-up in the treatment of hypothermia.

STANDARDS:

1. Discuss the importance of follow-up care.
2. Discuss the procedure for obtaining follow-up appointments and that follow-up appointments should be kept.
3. Emphasize that full participation in the treatment plan is the responsibility of the patient/family.
4. Discuss signs/symptoms that should prompt immediate follow-up.

5. Discuss the availability of community resources and support services and refer as appropriate.

HPTH-L LITERATURE

OUTCOME: The patient/family will receive literature about hypothermia and important preventative measures.

STANDARDS:

1. Provide the patient/family with literature on hypothermia.
2. Discuss the content of the literature.

HPTH-M MEDICATIONS

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the purpose, proper use, and expected outcomes of prescribed drug therapy.

STANDARDS:

1. Describe the name, strength, purpose, dosing directions, and storage of the medication.
2. Discuss the risks, benefits, and common or important side effects of the medication and follow up as appropriate.
3. Discuss any significant drug/drug, drug/food, and alcohol interactions, as appropriate.
4. Discuss the importance of keeping a list of all current prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbs, traditional remedies, and supplements. Encourage the patient to bring this list and pill bottles to appointments for medication reconciliation.

HPTH-MNT MEDICAL NUTRITION THERAPY

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the specific nutritional intervention(s) needed for treatment or management of hypothermia.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) is a systematic nutrition care process provided by a Registered Dietitian (RD) that consists of the following:
 - a. Assessment of the nutrition related condition.
 - b. Identification of the patient's nutritional problem.
 - c. Identification of a specific nutrition intervention therapy plan.
 - d. Evaluation of the patient's nutritional care outcomes.
 - e. Reassessment as needed.

2. Review the basic nutrition recommendations for the treatment plan.
3. Discuss the benefits of nutrition and exercise to health and well-being.
4. Assist the patient/family in developing an appropriate nutrition care plan.
5. Refer to other providers or community resources as needed.

HPTH-N NUTRITION

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the importance of adequate nutrition to promote healing.

STANDARDS:

1. Review the relationship between making healthy food choices and the healing process.
2. Refer to a registered dietitian for MNT as appropriate.

HPTH-P PREVENTION

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand ways to decrease the risk of hypothermia.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that it is easier to prevent hypothermia than to treat it.
2. Discuss risk factors to decrease the risk of hypothermia:
 - a. Poor or inadequate insulation from the cold or wind
 - b. Impaired circulation from tight clothing or shoes
 - c. Fatigue
 - d. Altitude
 - e. Wind
 - f. Immersion
 - g. Injuries
 - h. Circulatory disease
 - i. Poor nutrition
 - j. Dehydration
 - k. Alcohol or drug use
 - l. Tobacco products
 - m. Extremes of age
3. Discuss ways to decrease risk of hypothermia such as:

- a. Using appropriate layered clothing
- b. Avoiding overexertion while outdoors in cold weather
- c. Staying dry as much as possible
- d. Keeping an emergency supply kit in the car that may include blankets, food, matches, candles

HPTH-PM PAIN MANAGEMENT

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the plan for pain management.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that pain management may be multifaceted. **Refer to PM.**
2. Explain that short term use of narcotics may be helpful in pain management as appropriate.
3. Explain that other medications may be helpful to control symptoms of pain.
4. Discuss non-pharmacologic measures that may be helpful with pain control.

HPTH-SM STRESS MANAGEMENT

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the role of stress management in recovery from hypothermia.

STANDARDS:

1. Discuss that uncontrolled stress may increase alcohol and other drug use and interfere with treatment.
2. Emphasize the importance of seeking professional help as needed to reduce stress.
3. Discuss the various stress management strategies which may help maintain a healthy lifestyle. Examples may include:
 - a. Becoming aware of your own reactions to stress
 - b. Recognizing and accepting your limits
 - c. Talking with people you trust about your worries or problems
 - d. Setting realistic and meaningful goals
 - e. Getting enough sleep
 - f. Making healthy food choices
 - g. Doing regular physical activity
 - h. Taking vacations
 - i. Practicing meditation, self-hypnosis, and positive imagery

- j. Practicing relaxation methods such as deep breathing or progressive muscular relaxation
 - k. Participating in spiritual or cultural activities
4. Provide referrals as appropriate.

HPTH-TE TESTS

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the test(s) to be performed, the potential risks, the expected benefits, and the risks of non-testing.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain test(s) that have been ordered (explain as appropriate):
 - a. method of testing
 - b. necessity, benefits, and risks of test(s) to be performed
 - c. any potential risk of refusal of recommended test(s)
 - d. any advance preparation and instructions required for the test(s)
 - e. how the results will be used for future medical decision-making
 - f. how to obtain the results of the test
2. Explain test results:
 - a. meaning of the test results
 - b. follow-up tests may be ordered based on the results
 - c. how results will impact or effect the treatment plan
 - d. recommendations based on the test results

HPTH-TX TREATMENT

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the management and treatment of hypothermia.

STANDARDS:

1. Discuss the importance of seeking emergency medical care if hypothermia is suspected.
2. Explain if medical attention is not readily available then move the person out of the cold, remove wet clothing, insulate the person's body from the cold ground, monitor breathing, share body heat, and if conscious provide warm nonalcoholic beverages.
3. Discuss what **not** to do if hypothermia is suspected:
 - a. Don't apply direct heat
 - b. Don't massage or rub the person

c. Don't provide alcoholic beverages

4. Discuss the importance of slowly increasing the temperature of the person and getting the person into dry clothes when applicable.
5. Discuss the management of hypothermia (e.g., monitoring of vital signs, warming blankets, warm IV fluids, extracorporeal circulation).